

Victorian Heritage Database Report Upfield Railway (Brunswick & Coburg)



Location:

ALBERT ST, ALBION ST, BRUNSWICK RD, DAWSON ST, HOPE ST, PARK ST UNION ST, VICTORIA ST
BRUNSWICK and BELL ST, MORELAND RD, MUNRO ST & REYNARD ST COBURG, MERRI-BEK CITY

Heritage Status / Level of Significance:

Included in Heritage Overlay

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number: H0952

Listing Authority: VHR

Heritage Overlay Number: HO180**Precinct:**

Upfield Railway (Brunswick & Coburg)

Statement of Significance:

What is significant?

The Upfield Railway Line Precinct comprises the Jewell, Brunswick, Moreland and Coburg Railway Stations, and other buildings, structures, gates and signals between Park Street, Brunswick and Coburg Railway Station, Coburg.

The heritage place includes:

The four stations from Park Street to Coburg Station, the gatekeepers' cabins and gates, signal boxes, footbridges and other railway structures. These are mapped by the Heritage Council of Victoria as part of the State Heritage listing of the precinct.

How is it significant?

The Railway Precinct is of state historical, technological, architectural and social significance. The group of railway structures-which includes stations, gatekeepers' cabins and gates, signalling equipment and a footbridge-provides remarkably intact evidence of the technology and architecture of a late 19th and early 20th century railway system, and retains elements now rare or unique within the metropolitan area. The inter-relationship of these structures results in an entity-the Upfield line as a whole-which is of greater significance than its individual parts. The Precinct remains a lively, vital linear element in the fabric of the City of Moreland.

Why is it significant?

The Upfield Railway Line Precinct is of state historical significance as a rare and remarkably intact section of Melbourne's metropolitan railway system from the late 19th and early 20th century, which was an important component of city development and city life during that period and afterward.

The Upfield Railway Line Precinct is of state technical and architectural significance because while most suburban lines have been modified and updated, the Upfield line retains a unique collection of hand and wheel operated railway gates, and their associated buildings and installations, reflecting a safe working procedure more typical of the nineteenth rather than the twentieth century. These include the biggest group of hand operated gates and gate-keepers cabins in Victoria. _The original stations on the line - Jewell (originally South Brunswick), Brunswick, Moreland and Coburg - are built of brick in a late Victorian Gothic style to a similar, standard plan. Although other examples of the plan exist (eg Maldon) this grouping of four in such close proximity is unique adding a cohesion to the precinct.

The Upfield Railway Line Precinct is of state social significance as a lively, vital linear element in the fabric of the City of Moreland.

Description

Address: Railway line, buildings and equipment, between Park Street, Brunswick and Coburg Railway Station, Coburg

Includes:

Footbridge - Moreland

Gatekeeper's Cabins - Brunswick Road, Barkly Street, Albert Street, Hope Street

Gates - Park Street (north side), Brunswick Road, Barkly Street, Union Street, Dawson Street, Victoria Street, Hope Street, Albion Street, Tinning Street

Goods Shed - Jewell

Siding Track - between Dawson and Albert Streets (disused)

Signal Boxes - Union Street, Victoria Street, Moreland Road, Munro Street

Signal Masts - 24B, 25, 26, 28, 28B, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33B, 34, 35, 40, 42, 44

Shunting Signal - 43 (demolished)

Station Buildings and Platforms - Jewell, Brunswick, Anstey, Moreland, Coburg

The Railway Precinct is a linear Precinct which follows the railway line from Park Street north to Coburg Railway Station. The structures within the Precinct comprise a combination of habitable buildings-railway stations, footbridges, gatekeepers' cabins and signal boxes-and other railway-related equipment, including signal masts, signals, timber gates, substations, siding tracks and point locking mechanisms.

The variety of signals found along the Upfield is unusual, and includes tapered timber semaphore masts (1884-1900), rivetted metal lattice type masts (post-1900), welded strap metal masts (1950s) and pipe mast (1960s). Also associated with signalling along the line are kerosene lamps, coloured glass lenses, signal operating wire, and rodding and cabling equipment. Signal No. 43, a shunting disc signal, and the Westinghouse searchlight signal, are particularly unusual.(2) The Upfield line has the oldest surviving example of a Winters Block (or similar) safe-working system for double-track lines, with the mechanisms housed in signal boxes serving aerial lines running parallel to the tracks.(3)

The Upfield line originally included thirteen sets of hand-operated timber gates hung on timber or cast iron posts; the first sets were installed in 1884.(4) Within the precinct, two types of gates exist: hand-operated gates, and later interlocking wheel-operated gates.(5)

The high level of intactness of the original railway infrastructure-particularly the cabins, level crossing rail gates, and associated picket fences and pedestrian gates-allows a greater public appreciation of the historical significance of the precinct. The greatest concentration of these heritage structures is at the south end of the line, from the Park Street crossing north to the Hope Street crossing. The crossings, gates, signals, signal masts, gatekeepers' cabins and signal boxes best demonstrate the workings of a late 19th and early 20th century railway line.(6)

A well-used shared bicycle / pedestrian path follows the line from Park Street to Victoria Street. Plantings within the Precinct include natives along this path.

The study by Gutteridge Haskins and Davey Pty Ltd, produced for the Public Transport Corporation in 1996, Upfield Railway Line Heritage and Road Closures Study, identified the following sites within the precinct as being of high significance.(7) These structures make a particularly important contribution to the heritage significance of the precinct.

The following buildings have individual datasheets in the Moreland Heritage Review: Building Citations (1998):

Gatekeeper's Cabin and Gates, Albert Street (c.1880s)

Gatekeeper's Cabin and Gates, Barkly Street (c.1880s)

Gatekeeper's Cabin and Gates, Brunswick Road (c.1880s)

Gatekeeper's Cabin and Gates, Park Street (c.1880s)

Jewell Railway Station, Signal Box and Gates, Union Street (1888)

Brunswick Railway Station, Victoria Street (1888)

Note that the Gatekeeper's Cabin and Gates (south side) at Park Street, Brunswick, falls within the City of

Melbourne.

Sources

- (3) Gutteridge Haskins and Davey Pty Ltd. Upfield Railway Line Heritage and Road Closures Study: Final Report. November 1996. p 134
- (2) Gutteridge Haskins and Davey Pty Ltd. Upfield Railway Line Heritage and Road Closures Study: Final Report. November 1996. p 13.
- (4) Gutteridge Haskins and Davey Pty Ltd. Upfield Railway Line Heritage and Road Closures Study: Final Report. November 1996. p 14.
- (5) National Trust of Australia (Victoria). Upfield Railway Line: Technical Heritage Features. October 1996.
- (6) Gutteridge Haskins and Davey Pty Ltd. Upfield Railway Line Heritage and Road Closures Study: Final Report. November 1996.
- (7) Gutteridge Haskins and Davey Pty Ltd. Upfield Railway Line Heritage and Road Closures Study: Final Report. November 1996. pp 18-19.

Heritage Study / Consultant	Moreland - City of Moreland Heritage Review, Allen Lovell and Associates, 1999
Construction Date Range	
Architect / Designer	
Municipality	MERRI-BEK CITY
Other names	
Hermes number	56083
Property number	

This place/object may also be State heritage listed. Check the Victorian Heritage Database. For further details, contact the local Council or go to Planning Schemes Online